

Do Hunters feel?

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Summary: A Hunter pair. A mission gone wrong. A lone Spartan.

Do Hunters feel?

Forerunner facility, codename RAGNAROK. Time is 13:47.

The voice of Commander Sarah Palmer came through on the standard UNSC wavelength. "Get to the center hill. It's time we gave you some new toys." The Spartan, nameless except for her number designation, Spartan-227, jumped into a Ghost and raced away from the Forerunner spire, even as it released another burst of azure energy into the atmosphere. Through the grassy hills and around the rock outcroppings, past wrecked machinery and dead Covenant. All due to her, of course. CASTLE Team, whom she had come here to rescue, were all dead. Her EOD helmet flashed in the sun as she raced along. As she arrived at the center hill, five or six of the UNSC's signature Pelican dropships flew in from the ocean end of the valley, depositing five Mantis combat mechs and flying with a roar into the distance. Spartan-227 soon saw why. Purple alloy glinted in the sun as no less than two Covenant Phantoms and three Banshee fighters began dropping troops and set up strafing runs. She nimbly climbed into one of the Mantises. As she took the controls, Spartan-227 actually smiled. She loved a challenge.

As soon as all of the Grunts had dropped, the mighty Hunter pair hit the ground with an earth-shaking crash. As soon as they were able, they lumbered in the direction of the fighting, eager to kill the human scum. One of the human's metal golems sauntered into view. One of its arms spat fire and thunder and shot the Grunts dead. Not that the Hunters cared. Their armour protected the vulnerable worms of which they were made out of. Out of the corner of its field of vision, one Hunter saw its brother moving to get a better shot at the golem with its weapon. A green blip of light emanated from its arm and hit the golem. To both of the creatures surprise, it did nothing except make the golem shine brighter. The Hunter pair split off to fight the golem, and the dance began.

Spartan-227 was having a hard time in the Mantis. A Hunter pair had dropped from one of the Phantoms, and was giving her considerable trouble. An Assault Cannon shot impacted with her shields. The Hunters split up, one going behind the trees on the center hill and one going behind the hill itself. As it moved out of her firing line, she turned the Mantis on the other Hunter. None of the bullets seemed to have an effect on the gargantuan beast, and her rockets were far too slow. Spartan-227 decided this called for a more manual approach. She "walked" her Mantis up to the Hunter, brushing off its Assault Cannon shots like gnats. She clicked the right thumb stick, overloading the hydraulics of the Mantis' right leg. It lifted into the air, and thundered back down on top of the Hunter. Hunters were extremely durable, but not that durable. The gigantic corpse of the Covenant soldier flew over the hill, and smashed into CASTLE Team's crashed Pelican.

The Hunter moved behind the hill, where it could not see the golem any more. It heard the stomping of its metal legs, and in the back of its mind it wondered if the golem was coming for it. As he moved in front of the human's crashed metal bird, it heard a huge thunder, and its bond brother hurtled over the hill and into the metal bird. As the remaining Hunter walked to its brother to help it up, it noticed that the Lekgolo worms inside the armour casing were moving rapidly. All at once, the Hunter disintegrated, the worms burrowing into the soil. As the surviving brother looked upon the empty metal shell, it realised it was now alone in the world. Its brother was dead. Now, many UNSC and Covenant scientists have discussed whether the gigantic creatures could feel. If they had seen this Hunter, they would have had their answer. I let out a gigantic yell of pain and rage, the worms resonating as one for their fallen brothers. The Hunter moved faster than it ever had before, charging at the metal golem, determined for revenge, or otherwise death.

As she walked the Mantis down the other side of the hill, Spartan-227 saw the remaining Hunter. It was moving faster than the creatures had ever know to have moved, and it was coming right at her. She manoeuvred to meet it head-on, dodging Assault Cannon blasts. When it came within striking distance, the Hunter smashed its shield, as thick as UNSC starship battleplate, onto the Mantis' foot. As damage readouts scrolled across the cockpit screen, Spartan-227 knew she would have to do what she had with the last Hunter. Pressing the right thumb stick, she once again overloaded the hydraulics of the Mantis, raising its giant foot into the air.

The Hunter swung its shield onto the metal golem's foot, leaving a deep gouge in the armour there. Suddenly, the golem stopped firing its weapon. When it raised its foot into the air, it knew at once what the thunder was, and what had killed its brother. As it turned to flee, the golem started to bring its leg down. The last thing the Hunter saw was the UNSC insignia on the golem's heel.

Inside her Mantis, Spartan-227 watched as the foot fell, sending a plume of dust into the air. The monstrous soldier was driven into the ground by a tonne of metal. Just before the Mantis stomp had landed upon it, if she didn't know better, she could've sworn she had heard the Hunter scream.

End

file.